

Pastor Geoffrey R. Boyle
Matins – Pre-Lent Retreat
25 January 2012
Mark 15:42-47

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit

Saul of Tarsus was looking for the Kingdom of God,
and zealously at that!

He looked for this Kingdom with every program and tool available to him—

He was a Jew,
a Pharisee of Pharisees,
of the tribe of Benjamin,
educated at the feet of Gamaliel,
the president and top scholar of the leading seminary of the day,
he was credentialed, rubbed shoulders with all the big names,
his continuing ed exceeded all the rest,
and on top of it all, he was also a Roman citizen.

Saul had it all, and if anyone was going to find the Kingdom of God, it was him.

And the Kingdom Saul sought was great.

He wouldn't have anything less—
it would be pure and holy,
dynamic, growing, and transformative,
it would be powerful and glorious and simply the best.

Anything that marred this pure and perfect kingdom was destroyed.

By any means necessary, even by the shedding of blood, this kingdom must be preserved.
Saul was willing to do anything to reach and obtain this kingdom.

But Saul's searching for this kingdom resulted in blindness, weakness, and deep, deep humility.

But it was here, and here alone, the Kingdom of God would be revealed.

Now, Joseph of Arimathea was also looking for the Kingdom of God.

But instead of looking for the Kingdom in the ways of our world,
instead of seeking the powerful and the growing,
the exalted or the strong,

Our Gospel states,

**“Joseph of Arimathea...who was also looking for the Kingdom of God, took courage
and went to Pilate and asked for the Body of Jesus” (Mk 15:43).**

And there, with the Body of Jesus, Joseph found the Kingdom of God.

There are all sorts of ways to get it wrong—
bigger, better, greater, stronger.

But the Kingdom of God refuses to be found by way of power or program or success,
it comes only in weakness, only in humility, only in the broken, crucified, body of Jesus.

It is to this Body of Christ, the crucified body of God, that Saul of Tarsus was converted.

And that's how it is for us too.

As we seek the kingdom of God, we'll find it only in Christ, only in His Body.

And for this reason, the Body of Christ is given to us.

The Kingdom comes to us.

Jesus gives Himself for you and to you.

So, like Joseph of Arimathea and St. Paul, we take courage.

For you are in Christ;

you're brought into His body,

and there we have the Kingdom of God.

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit